

## **M E M O R A N D U M**

**TO:** Governing Board Members

**FROM:** Kenneth G. Ammon, P.E., Deputy Executive Director,  
Everglades Restoration and Capital Projects Resource Area

**DATE:** February 10, 2010

**SUBJECT:** Environmental Services Laboratory Construction Project – List of  
Prequalified Construction Contractors

### **Background:**

The South Florida Water Management District (District) operates and maintains an expansive 1,800-mile water management network of canals and levees, including 29 major pump stations and 200 water control structures, along with another 2,000 smaller structures. As part of this critical operation, the District manages the Environmental Services Laboratory Facility currently located at 1480 Skees Road in West Palm Beach, Florida. The leased complex, comprised of two primary structures, an accessory support shed and parking lot, is a State-certified facility that conducts over 150,000 analyses each year in support of legally mandated and permit requirements. Water samples from the entire 16 county region, which extends from the Kissimmee River Valley to Lake Okeechobee, and to the Everglades Agricultural Area to Florida Bay, are brought to this facility for analysis.

The existing laboratory located at Skees Road lacks many basic necessary components for safe, long-term operation, and would require significant unrecoverable capital to pay for the cost of required improvements. Coupled with uncertainties as to the availability of a new long-term lease with the landlord, and the lack of space for relocating other District laboratories to this facility, the District is relocating the lab to a new building to be constructed on its existing Field Operations Center in West Palm Beach. In the design, construction and subsequent operation of the new facility, the District is striving to meet Governor Crist's Executive Order Number 07-126 to implement the U.S. Green Building Council Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) standards by achieving as high a LEED certification level for the building as economically feasible.

To ensure this new facility is properly constructed, within budget and schedule, and ultimately succeeds in achieving a LEED certification, the District released a publicly advertised Request for Statement of Qualifications as part of a two-step bidding process. The first step of the process was to obtain qualification and experience information in order to prequalify firms for the construction of the new laboratory facility. To be qualified, the firms had to meet a set of minimum requirements, as specified in the solicitation. Only those firms considered prequalified by the District, as a result of the review of the prequalification applications, will be provided the opportunity to submit

bids during the second step of this two-step solicitation process. Minimum prequalifications or experience specified in the solicitation included construction experience with large, multi-story facilities, lab facilities, projects involving LEED certification and experience of an on-site superintendent. The Notice to Proceed on construction of the project is expected to be issued in July 2010 with final completion anticipated in September 2011.

The 10 firms meeting the prequalifications are listed below.

1. Turner Construction Company
2. The Weitz Company
3. Owen-Ames-Kimball Company
4. DPR Construction, Inc.
5. Kraft Construction Company, Inc.
6. Biltmore Construction Company, Inc.
7. J. Kokolakis Contracting, Inc.
8. Pirtle Construction Company
9. Suffolk Construction Company, Inc.
10. Kaufman Lynn, Inc.

**How this helps meeting the District's 10-year Strategic Plan:**

Approval of the List of Prequalified Construction Contractors will provide a high level of assurance that the project will be constructed by a qualified, experienced construction contractor, thereby limiting the risk of failing to complete the project on time, failing to complete the project within budget and failing to achieve LEED certification.

**Funding Source:** No funding is associated with this item. Upon receipt of the final plans and specifications, a Request for Bid will be issued only to the contractors on the List of Prequalified Construction Contractors. Once staff has selected the bid, the ensuing construction contract, which has been budgeted for in FY10, will be subject to Governing Board approval.

**This Board item impacts what areas of the District, both resource areas and geography:** The Everglades Restoration and Capital Projects Resource Area is responsible for managing the project's design, permitting, construction and operation of the Environmental Services Lab Facility. Corporate Resources is responsible for procuring the project's construction contract, as well as operation and maintenance activities on the building. Geographically, the proposed project site is located at the District's existing Field Operations Center in West Palm Beach, on the south side of Belvedere Road, west of Sansbury Way.

**What concerns could this Board item raise?** A concern related to this Board item is the potential for protest from contractors who are not on the List of Prequalified Construction Contractors and, therefore, will be excluded from submitting a bid for this construction project. However, the Request for Statement of Qualifications (RFQ) was publicly advertised to all interested parties, and each submittal was reviewed for both

responsiveness and responsibility. In addition to listing the minimum requirements for success, the solicitation also advised respondents of the pass/fail criteria that would be used to determine the short list at a publicly noticed meeting. A total of 17 firms submitted requests for prequalification and 10 were found to meet the minimum requirements.

**Why should the Governing Board approve this item?** The Governing Board should approve this item to provide a high level of assurance that a contractor with appropriate qualifications and experience is utilized to construct the new Environmental Services Laboratory Facility.

Attachment – Resolution  
KGA/ds/as